

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER RECENT EVENTS IN SIERRA LEONE IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT MILITARY COUP

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 16, 1997

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today a bipartisan group of colleagues and I have introduced a bill condemning the recent military coup d'etat in the Republic of Sierra Leone. The coup caused a great setback for democracy in this small West African nation. Let me explain.

On February 26, 1996, Sierra Leone held their first democratic elections in nearly 30 years. There had been a military coup less than a month before the election, and a civil war was still taking place in the countryside. A runoff election to choose between the two frontrunners in the presidential race occurred on March 15, 1996.

Despite some minor inadequacies, a group of international observers deemed the elections to be free and fair. On March 29, 1996, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the Sierra Leone People's Party was sworn in as the President of Sierra Leone. This peaceful transition from a military regime to a freely elected civilian government was a tremendous step onto the road to democracy.

Not long after the inauguration, I came to the floor with some of my colleagues to congratulate President Kabbah and the people of Sierra Leone through House Concurrent Resolution 160. The bill passed unanimously through both the House and Senate.

Things were going well in Sierra Leone during their first year as a democracy. For example, when there were problems in neighboring Liberia, Sierra Leone allowed the United States Marines to use their airport as a base to evacuate American citizens from Monrovia.

Unfortunately, on May 25, 1997, an unruly gang of thugs staged a coup d'etat, taking many of us by surprise. Johnny Paul Koroma and his Armed Forces Ruling Council took responsibility for the coup. President Kabbah and members of the government were forced to leave the country as the United States Marines arrived to the country again—this time to evacuate our citizens and other foreign nationals from Sierra Leone. Those who had to stay behind were subject to rampant killing, looting, raping, and a disruption of critical relief supplies throughout the country.

It is because of all this that a group of our colleagues, specifically ALCEE HASTINGS, TONY HALL, Chairman ED ROYCE, Ranking Member BOB MENENDEZ, and the entire membership of the House Subcommittee on Africa, decided to introduce a concurrent resolution expressing our concern for the people of Sierra Leone. In the resolution, we call for an end to violence, restoration of the democratically elected government, the protection and safety of international aid workers who remain in the coun-

try, and what is most important, a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

So, it is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that you and all of my colleagues in the House and Senate will join us in support of democracy and order in Africa—specifically in the Republic of Sierra Leone.

UNITED STATES-CHINA RELATIONS: THE CASE FOR ENGAGEMENT

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 16, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, last week the Asia Society sponsored a major conference here in Washington on the subject of "China, Japan, and Korea: Challenges for United States Business and Policy in Northeast Asia."

The Asia Society deserves commendation for organizing a conference on this important topic. The Asia Society is known throughout the country, and indeed throughout the world, for both its efforts to foster a better understanding of Asia, and its attempts to bring this understanding to a broader audience here in the United States. Last week's conference represented another attempt to fulfill this latter task.

I was privileged to address this conference on the subject of United States-China relations. The Congress later this month will engage in a very important debate on the future of China's trade status—a debate that could set the tone for United States-China relations for many years to come.

Given the importance of the coming debate, I would like to place my comments before the Asia Society in the RECORD, in the hope that my colleagues might find them of some use as they look forward to congressional consideration of China's trade status.

THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA: THE CASE FOR ENGAGEMENT—REMARKS BY LEE H. HAMILTON—ASIA SOCIETY—JUNE 11, 1997

One big question of the coming decade is: Where is China going? Will China become a rival or even a threat to the United States? Or will it choose to cooperate, to participate in global political, economic, and security regimes, and abide by international norms and rules of behavior?

This is not an academic question. How China evolves over the next decade will profoundly affect our economic, political and security interests around the world. If China becomes a threat to the United States, our defense budget will go up, tensions in Asia will rise, and Asia's remarkable prosperity will be at risk.

If China and the United States keep their relationship on track, peace and security in Asia will be strengthened, the prospects for human rights will be enhanced, and Asia's remarkable economic growth can continue.

China is emerging as a great power. We could not halt that evolution if we wanted to. But we can and should try to shape the kind of power China will become. We can try

to ensure that China is integrated into the world community, rather than isolated from it.

At the heart of this debate, indeed every foreign policy debate, is one central question: what is the U.S. national interest?

Our overriding interest is to have sound relations with China.

China is, after all, the world's most populous country—it has grown by 400 million people since Richard Nixon visited in 1972—and possesses one of the world's largest economies.

With the world's largest standing army, China's actions have a direct bearing on peace and stability throughout East and Southeast Asia.

As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China is not only a key country in Asia, but has a significant impact on U.S. interests around the world.

U.S. efforts to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction in Iran, North Korea and elsewhere can succeed only if China cooperates with us and the rest of the international community.

In the economic front, American exports and American jobs are dependent upon sound relations with China. Last year we sold nearly \$12 billion of goods to China. These exports supported 170,000 high-wage American jobs.

Our two countries, despite our differences, share many interests: a stable, peaceful, and prosperous East Asia; a global economy characterized by predictability, reduced trade barriers, and widely-accepted rules; stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction; and avoiding a regional arms race or even a new cold war.

THE MOOD TODAY: A NEW ANGER AT CHINA

This is the most difficult bilateral relationship to understand and to manage, even in the best of times—and right now we are in the midst of another China-bashing season.

Many Americans are angered by China's human rights practices; its proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons technology and components; its sales of missiles; its bullying of Taiwan and oppression of Tibet; its trade practices, which have led to a huge bilateral trade imbalance; and reports of illegal campaign contributions to U.S. candidates.

Citing these concerns, politicians and pundits have identified China as America's next adversary. They have concluded that China will never play by the rules, and it is useless to try to integrate it into global political, security, and economic regimes.

IS CHINA A THREAT TO THE U.S.?

But is China a threat? I believe there is no basis for believing that China will pose a serious threat to the U.S. any time soon. China is simply not in our league.

In 1995, China's GDP stood at \$698 billion. Ours was ten times that size. The disparity in GDP per capita is even more striking: \$620 for each Chinese, \$27,000 for each American.

The military imbalance is as stark: China has fewer than a dozen intercontinental ballistic missiles; we have 755; China has roughly 300 strategic nuclear warheads; we have more than 11,000; China has no aircraft carriers; we have 12; China has approximately 50 top-of-the-line warplanes; we have more than 3,400; China lacks the ability to project military power much beyond its borders.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.